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ABSTRACT

A study was conducted at Howard Community College (HCC) to determine employers' perceptions of the employment preparation and job training provided by HCC. Questionnaires were mailed to the employers of 38 1986 graduates, who had previously granted permission for their employers to be contacted. Study findings, based on a 68% response rate, included the following: (1) 69% of the employers indicated that the graduates' jobs were closely related to their education; (2) all of the employers said that the graduates' ability to learn on the job was good or very good; (3) 88% gave the graduates good or very good ratings with respect to their oral communication skills and work attitudes; (4) 88% of the employers rated the graduates' preparation as good or very good, and all employers responding to the question said that they would hire another HCC graduate; and (5) 72% gave ratings of good or very good to the graduates' familiarity with the equipment required by their jobs. (EJV)

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Howard
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THE SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS OF 1986 HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADUATES:

A REPORT OF THE FINDINGS

RESEARCH REPORT NUMBER 53

JULY 1988

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RESEARCH REPORT NUMBER 53

JULY 1988

Office of Research and Personnel

Howard Community College

Columbia, Maryland

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THE SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS OF 1986 HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADUATES:: A REPORT OF THE FINDINGS

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BRIEF SUMMARY OF RESEARCH (RESEARCH REPORT NUMBER 53)

TITLE: THE SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS OF 1986 HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADUATES: A REPORT OF THE FINDINGS

AUTHOR: Barbara B. Livieratos, Research Analyst

PURPOSE: This report examines the responses of a sample of employers of 1986 Howard Community College graduates to the Employer Survey. The employers' views on the graduates' preparation for employment and their vocational training are presented.

METHODOLOGY: The annual Graduate Follow-up Survey contains a section on the employment of the graduates. Employed graduates are asked if their employers may be contacted, and if they give permission their employers are sent the Employer Survey. Thirty-eight employers of 1986 graduates were sent surveys, and 68% completed them. This report offers descriptive information based on the survey responses.

FINDINGS: In general, the employers were positive in their responses about the 1986 HCC graduates. The graduates' job preparation and vocational training were rated favorably by the employers. Among the report's findings:

- All (100%) of the employers who responded said that the 1986 HCC graduates they hired demonstrated good or very good ability to learn on the job.
- Eighty-eight percent of the employers gave the graduates good or very good ratings in both their oral communication skills and attitude toward work.
- The overall ratings on the graduates' preparation showed that 88% of the employers thought that their preparation was good or very good.
- All (100%) of those who responded said that they would hire another HCC graduate.

THE SURVEY OF EMPLOYERS OF 1986 HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADUATES: A REPORT OF THE FINDINGS

In Fiscal Year 1986 Howard Community College had 273 graduates. One year after their graduation they were sent follow-up surveys, the general practice adhered to for each class of graduates. One hundred fifty-four graduates (61% after adjusting for "undeliverables") responded to the survey. Among those who responded, 38 gave permission to have their employers contacted by the college. All of those employers were sent Employer Surveys, and 26 (68%) returned them. This report presents the findings from that survey of employers of 1986 HCC graduates. Included in the discussion are responses from employers of both full-time and part-time employees.

Table One shows the graduates' programs while attending HCC. Included in this table is information showing:

- As in past employer surveys, a larger proportion of employers of Nursing graduates responded (10 employers, or 38.5%) than did employers of graduates of any other program.

- Employers of graduates of thirteen other HCC programs responded to the survey. The numbers representing each program, however, are too small to draw any conclusions about specific programs.

The first question on the survey asked the employer how closely related the graduate's job was to his or her community college program. Table Two and Graph One show how employers responded to that question:

- Sixty-nine percent of the employers said that the graduates' jobs were closely related to their education.

    - Nine of the ten employers of Nursing graduates said that the jobs were closely matched to the graduates' education.

- Good or very good ratings were given to the graduates on their ability to solve problems related to the job by 81% of the employers. Five employers (19%) rated graduates as fair in this area.

  - o Eight of the employers of nurses said the graduates were good or very good in job-related problem solving.

- Writing skills were seen as being good or very good by 79% of the employers.

  - o Of the ten employers of Nursing graduates who responded, eight gave high ratings in writing skills.

- Seventy-two percent of the employers rated graduates as being good or very good in their familiarity with equipment required by the job. Conversely, 28% gave graduates fair ratings in this area.

  - o Seven of the ten employers of Nursing graduates gave good or very good ratings in familiarity with equipment.

- When employers gave overall ratings on the graduates' preparation, 88% of them said that the graduates' preparation was good or very good.

  - o Nine of the ten employers of nurses gave good or very good ratings in the overall preparation of the graduates.

- Of the responding employers, 23% said that the 1986 HCC graduates were in jobs somewhat related to their educational programs.

- Eight percent (two) of the employers described the graduates' jobs as being in a different field.

Employers were asked the following question: "Compared to other entering employees, how well do you feel the community college prepared the graduate in the areas listed below?" Table Three and Graph Two show how employers answered that question in relation to the specific job-related areas listed. It also shows the Overall rating of the preparation of the graduates. Note that those who did not give an opinion were excluded from this table and the percentages shown are based on those who gave a response. The table reveals that:

- All of the employers (100%) who responded said that the 1986 HCC graduates they hired demonstrated good or very good ability to learn on the job.

- Eighty-eight percent of the employers gave the graduates good or very good ratings in both their oral communication skills and attitude toward work.

  - All but one of the ten employers of Nursing graduates gave good or very good ratings in oral communication and attitude toward work.

- Graduates' knowledge of specific job skills was rated as good or very good by 84% of the employers.

  - Eight of the employers of nurses gave good or very good ratings in knowledge of specific job skills.

Employers seemed to be especially enthusiastic about hiring another graduate from the same community college program. As shown in Table Four:

- All (100%) of those who responded to that item (one did not), said that they would hire another HCC graduate.

- Likewise, 100% of the employers who responded said that they would recommend that other employers hire a graduate of the same program.

On the whole, the results from the survey of employers of 1986 Howard Community College graduates are positive. The high proportion of graduates in jobs related to their course of study is an important finding. The employers' ratings of the graduates' preparation in specific job-related areas were mostly very good or good. Two areas that may deserve further attention are writing skills and familiarity with equipment required by the job.

As in past employer surveys, there was unanimous agreement about the value of hiring other graduates of the same programs and in recommending that other employers do the same.

TABLE ONE. EMPLOYERS WHO RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY BY THE PROGRAM GRADUATES WERE IN AT HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Program	Number	Percent
1. Nursing	10	38.5%
2. Accounting	2	7.7
3. Data Processing	2	7.7
4. Biomedical Eng. Technology	2	7.7
5. Business Administration	1	3.8
6. General Studies	1	3.8
7. Medical Secretarial Science	1	3.8
8. Engineering Science	1	3.8
9. Secondary Education	1	3.8
10. Pre-Pharmacy	1	3.8
11. General Studies - Science	1	3.8
12. Vision Care Program	1	3.8
13. Information System Management	1	3.8
14. Electronic Technician Certif.	1	3.8
TOTAL	26	100.0%

TABLE TWO. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GRADUATE'S JOB AND THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROGRAM

Relatedness between Education and Job	Number	Percent
o Education closely matched job requirements	18	69%
o Job in somewhat related field; education covered most job requirements	6	23%
o Job in different field; education did not cover most entry job requirements	2	8%
TOTAL	26	100%

GRAPH ONE

RELATEDNESS BETWEEN 1986 HCC GRADUATES' JOBS AND THEIR EDUCATION

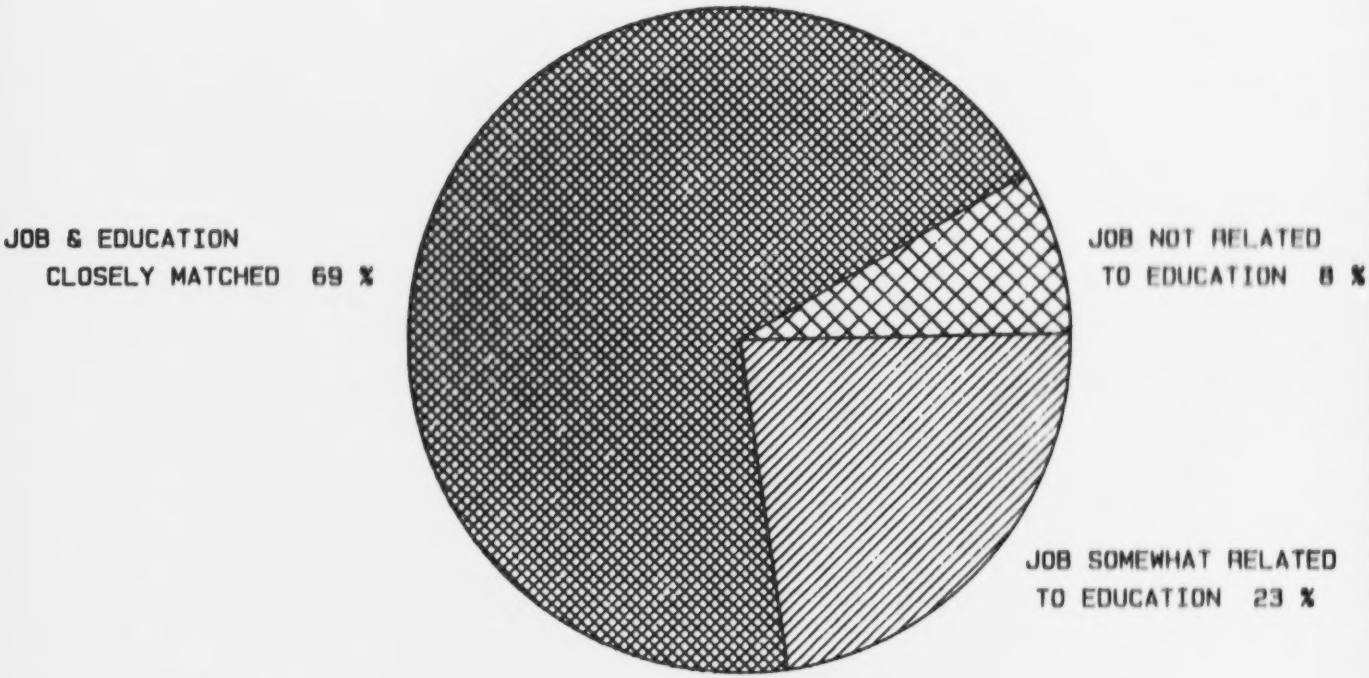

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TABLE THREE. EMPLOYERS' RATINGS OF GRADUATES' PREPARATION IN SPECIFIC JOB-RELATED AREAS

Area	% Very Good/ Good	% Fair	% Poor/ Very Poor
o Ability to learn on the job	100%	0%	0%
o Oral communication skills	88	12	0
o Attitude toward work	88	8	4
o Knowledge of specific technical job skills	84	16	0
o Ability to solve problems related to job	81	19	0
o Writing Skills	79	17	4
o Familiarity with equipment required by job	72	12	0
o RATING OF OVERALL PREPARATION	88	12	0

GRAPH TWO

PERCENTAGE OF EMPLOYERS WHO RATED 1986 HCC GRADUATES' PREPARATION AS GOOD OR VERY GOOD

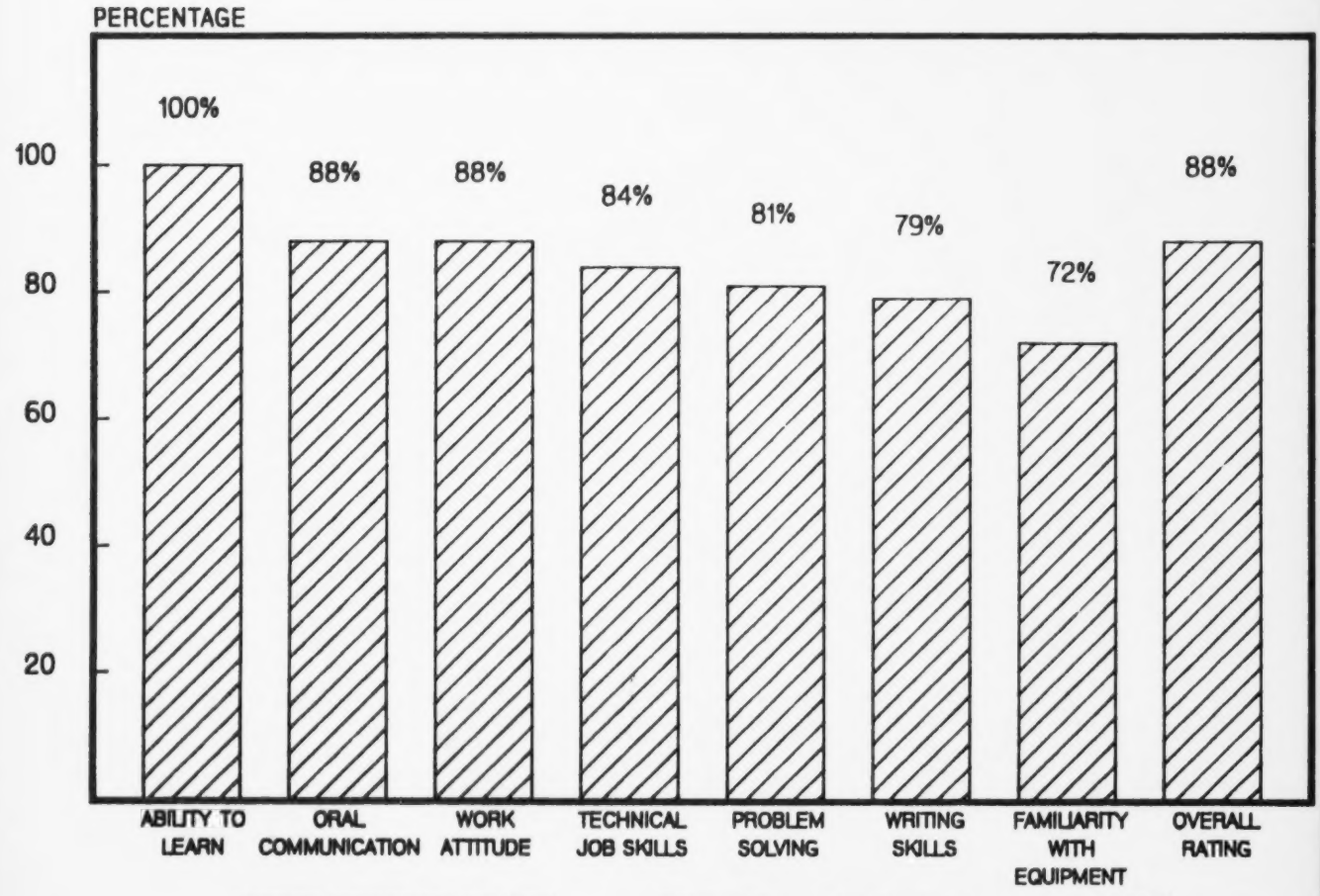

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TABLE FOUR. WILLINGNESS OF EMPLOYERS TO HIRE OTHER GRADUATES AND TO RECOMMEND THAT OTHER EMPLOYERS DO THE SAME

Question	Percent Responding YES	NO
o Would you hire another graduate of this community college program?	100%	0%
o Would you recommend that other employers hire a graduate of this program?	100%	0%

HOWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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